



More people than ever are volunteering !

Between 1982 and 2003, 318,000 Earth Team volunteers donated over ten million hours of service to NRCS. This service is valued at more than \$167.2 million (based on \$16.54/hour as established by Points of Light Foundation).

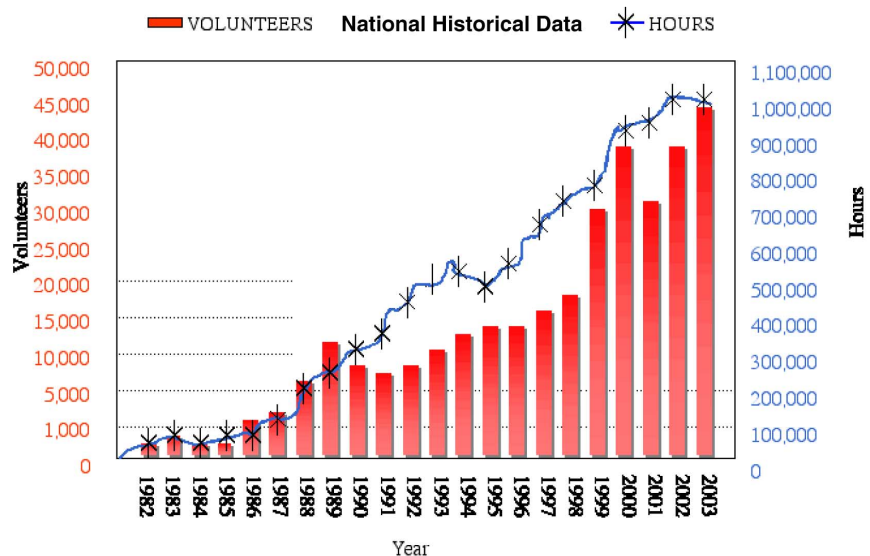
In 1982, the Earth Team started with 327 volunteers who donated 29,000 hours. In 2003, 43,834 Earth Team volunteers donated more than one million hours of help to NRCS.

Volunteers – a vital part of the team!

Since the organization of local conservation districts in the 1930s, people have volunteered their time and talent to assist the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in getting conservation on the land. Through the decades, volunteering has remained an important part of America's conservation movement. Expanding the volunteer concept, congress passed legislation in 1981 that provided authority for NRCS to use volunteers.

It wasn't until 1985, when the Farm Bill increased the agency's workload, that leadership encouraged all states to begin using the National Volunteer Program to help achieve the agency's mission.

In 1985, the National Volunteer Program became the Earth Team – the volunteer arm of NRCS. The purpose of the Earth Team is to expand NRCS services by using volunteer time, talent, and energy to help meet agency needs.



With a seemingly ever-declining federal workforce, volunteers will be needed to help NRCS successfully meet customers' needs and carry out its mission. Now as in the past, the Earth Team is continually looking for volunteers who want to help conserve natural resources.

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